UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/720,375	11/25/2003	Sunao Kawai	116533	4288

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

PTOL-90A (Rev. 04/07)

	Application No.	Applicant(s)
Office Action Summary	10/720,375	KAWAI, SUNAO
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Hieu T. Hoang	2152	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE _3_ MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.
- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on _25 November 2003_.

2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.   2b) ☒ This action is non-final.

3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) ☒ Claim(s) _1-45_ is/are pending in the application.

    4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) ☒ Claim(s) _1-45_ is/are rejected.

7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on _25 November 2003_ is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.

    Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

    Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

    a) ☒ All   b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:

      1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

      2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

      3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

    * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date _01/09/2004_.

4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____.

PTOL-326 (Rev. 08-06)   Office Action Summary   Part of Paper No./Mail Date 20071114

DETAILED ACTION

1.   This office action is in response to the communication filed on 11/25/2003.

2.   Claims 1-45 are pending and presented for examination.

Specification

3.   The title of the invention is objected to for being undescriptive. Correction is

required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

4.   35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

> Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of
> matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the
> conditions and requirements of this title.

5.   Claims 42-44 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 the claimed invention is directed

to non-statutory subject matter. No explicit definition of "a computer program product" is

found in the specification. "A computer program product" per se is non-statutory subject

matter, since the computer program product can be read as any product that contains

software codes, such as a transmission medium (cables or wires) for transporting

computer codes. Correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

6.   The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that

form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

> A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by
another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent
granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the
applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section
351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States
only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2)
of such treaty in the English language.

7.   Claims 1-8, 10-15, 20, 39, 42 and 45 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as

being anticipated by Simpson et al. (US 2003/0084086, hereafter Simpson).

8.   For claim 1, Simpson discloses a network system having a plurality of terminal

devices and an electronic device whose function is shared by said plurality of terminal

device, said plurality of terminal devices and said electronic device being

communicatively connected through a network, operational parameters of said

electronic device being set by users of said plurality of terminal devices through the

network (abstract, fig. 1a, 1b, printers with users' personal settings), said network

system comprising:

        a monitoring period determining system that determines a monitoring period with

respect to operational parameters set by a first user ([00074], [0075], estimated

processing time of a reserved print job with associated printing settings of a first user);

        a monitoring system that monitors whether a request for modification of the

operational parameters issued by a second user is received during the monitoring

period ([0076], monitor whether print time of a second user conflicts with the first user's

print time and settings); and

        a modification control system that modifies the operational parameters in

accordance with the request for modification if the monitoring system determines that

the request for the modification is received after expiration of the monitoring period

([0076], store job and apply second print settings if time does not conflict),

said modification control system executing at least one of rejecting the request by

the second user and outputting a message corresponding to the request by the second

user if said monitoring system determines that the request for modification is received

during the monitoring period ([0076], prompt the second user to select a different print

time if his print time conflicts with the reserved print time with settings of the first user).

9.   For claim 2, Simpson further discloses the monitoring period is defined as a time

period after the operational parameters are set by the first user ([0075], period of

printing with settings by the first user).

10.   For claim 3, Simpson further discloses said monitoring period setting system

includes a time period inputting system, the monitoring period being determined based

on the time period input through said time period inputting system ([0074], [0075],

reserved print job has an input start time).

11.   For claim 4, Simpson further discloses an end of the monitoring period is defined

as a point of time ([0075], processing time).

12.   For claim 5, Simpson further discloses said monitoring period setting system

includes a time inputting system, an end of the monitoring period being determined

based on the point of time which is input through said time inputting system ([0074],

[0075], reserved end time is based on start time and processing time).

13. For claim 6, Simpson further discloses the message output by the modification

control system is a message, which is transmitted to the second user, indicating that a

current time is within the monitoring period ([0076], a message to the second user to

select a new start time if time conflicts).

14. For claim 7, Simpson further discloses the message output by the modification

control system is a message, which is transmitted to the first user, informing that the

operational parameters have been modified by the second user within the monitoring

period ([0070], "job deferred" message).

15. For claim 8, Simpson further discloses a permission requesting system that

requests the first user for permission to modify the operational parameters ([0070],

interrupt request).

16. For claim 10, Simpson further discloses a postponed period checking system that

checks whether a postponed period for postponing the modification of the operational

parameters has expired, the postponed period being instructed by the terminal device,

said modification controlling system enabling the modification of the operational

parameters after expiration of the postponed period ([0076], postponed second print job

with settings).

17.   For claim 11, Simpson further discloses a setting management device which is

connected with said terminal device and a plurality of electronic devices through the

network, said setting management device being provided with a setting input system

that is used to input modification settings of the operational parameters for said plurality

of electronic device, the modification settings input through said setting input system

being set in said plurality of electronic devices (fig. 5A, 2B, [0061], client machine

includes settings input module, which is a web interface).

18.   For claim 12, Simpson further discloses one of said plurality of terminal devices

includes said setting management device (fig. 5A, client machine includes settings

module).

19.   For claim 13, Simpson further discloses said setting management device

includes an electronic device selecting system that selects at least one of the plurality of

electronic devices as a target device whose operational parameters are to be modified,

the modification settings input through said setting input system being effected as the

modification settings of said at least one of the electronic device selected by said

electronic device selecting system ([0113], select a printer for printing with personal

settings).

20.   For claim 14, Simpson further discloses said terminal device includes an

instruction system that transmits instructions to the electronic device using a

predetermined communication protocol ([0041], e.g., HArmstrongP); and wherein said

electronic device includes a job executing system that executes a job which is instructed

by said instruction system and transmitted from said terminal device using the

predetermined communication protocol ([0041], [0054], send jobs to printer using a

protocol), the operational parameters including a parameter to be used when said

electronic device communicates with said terminal device using the predetermined

communication protocol (abstract, job with selected options).

21.   For claim 15, Simpson further discloses said electronic device includes a printing

system, the operational parameters including a parameter related to an output format

when said electronic device prints a print job with said printing system ([0066], finishing

options of print jobs).

22.   For claim 20, Simpson further discloses said electronic device includes an

interruption procedure execution system that executes an interruption procedure when a

predetermined job is executed, the operational parameters including a parameter that

enables/disables execution of the interruption procedure during the predetermined job

([0070], interrupt an executed print job).

23.   Claims 39 and 42 are rejected for the same rationale in claim 1.

24.   For claim 45, Simpson discloses a network system having a plurality of terminal

devices and an electronic device whose function is shared by said plurality of terminal

device, said plurality of terminal devices and said electronic device being

communicatively connected through a network, operational parameters of said

electronic device being set by users of said plurality of terminal devices through the

network, said network system comprising:

a monitoring condition determining system that determines a monitoring condition

with respect operational parameters set by a first user ([0074]-[0076], monitoring

duration of a first user's print job with associated settings);

a monitoring system that monitors whether a request for modification of the

operational parameters received from a second user meets the monitoring condition

([0076], determining whether second user request is in a "black out" period set by the

first user);

a modification control system that modifies the operational parameters in

accordance with the request for modification if the monitoring system determines that

the request for the modification meets the monitoring condition, said modification control

system executes a predetermined operation if said monitoring system determines that

the request for modification does not meet the monitoring condition ([0076], apply

second print settings if outside blacked out period).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

25.   The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all

obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

26.   Claims 21-25, 27-32, 37, 40, 43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being

unpatentable over Simpson.

27.   For claim 21, Simpson discloses a network system having a plurality of terminal

devices and an electronic device whose function is shared by said plurality of terminal

device, said plurality of terminal devices and said electronic device being

communicatively connected through a network, operational parameters of said

electronic device being set by users of said plurality of terminal devices through the

network, said network system comprising:

a number of execution determining system that determines the number of times

of operations to be executed by said electronic device in accordance with operational

parameters set by a first user ([0075], determine number of pages to be printed with

associated settings by a first user);

a monitoring system that monitors whether the number of executed operations of

said electronic device exceeds the number of times determined by said number of

execution determining system when a request for modification of the operational

parameters issued by a second user is received ([0076], determining conflicts when a second user reserve a second print job at the same time interval); and

a modification control system that modifies the operational parameters in accordance with the request for modification if monitoring system determines that the time at executed operations of said electronic device exceeds the processing time of the number of times determined by said number of execution determining system ([0076], store job and apply second print settings if time does not conflict),

said modification control system executing at least one of rejecting the request by the second user and outputting a message corresponding to the request by the second user if said monitoring system determines that the time at the number of executed operations of said electronic device is equal to or less than the processing time of the number of times determined by said number of execution determining system ([0076], prompt the second user to select a different print time if his print time conflicts with the reserved print time with settings of the first user).

Simpson does not explicitly disclose that monitoring is based on number of executed operations.

However, Simpson discloses monitoring is based on time period that is determined based on number of operations (such as number of pages) ([0075])

Therefore, it would have been obvious for one skilled in the art at the timze of the invention to modify the teachings of Simpson so that determining a "blacked out" stage of modification requests from subsequent users can be done based on number of

executed operations of the device so that subsequent users can only request print jobs

outside the "blacked out" stage set by the first user ([Simpson, 0076]).

28.   For claim 22, Simpson further discloses said terminal device includes an

instruction system that instructs said electronic device to execute a job; wherein said

electronic device includes a job executing system that executes the job instructed by

said terminal device, said number of execution determining system determining the

number of executions of the job to be executed by said job executing system ([0075],

fig. 2a, production device, a printer for executing print pages for a first user).

29.   For claim 23, Simpson further discloses the message output by the modification

control system is a message, which is transmitted to the second user, indicating that the

number of executed operations of said electronic device is equal to or less than the

number of times determined by said number of execution determining system ([0076],

second user is prompted to select another start time because first user's print job is in

execution).

30.   For claim 24, Simpson further discloses the message output by the modification

control system is a message, which is transmitted to the first user, informing that the

operational parameters have been modified by the second user before the number of

executed operations of said electronic device exceeds the number of times determined

by said number of execution determining system ([0070], interrupt request and job

deferred messages to the first user).

31.   Claims 25 and 27-32 are rejected for the same rationale as in claims 8 and 10-15

respectively.

32.   Claim 37 is rejected for the same rationale as in claim 20.

33.   Claims 40 and 43 are rejected for the same rationale in claim 21.

34.   Claims 16-19 and 33-36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being

unpatentable over Simpson, in view of Official Notice.

35.   For claims 16-19, Official Notice is taken that user's settings relating to output

format of a print job such as banner print, sheet supply, default sheet and default tray

are well-known in the art (see e.g., Costello, US 5,547,178)

       Therefore, it would have been obvious for one skilled in the art at the time of the

invention to combine the teachings of Simpson and what has been known in the art to

apply user's settings relating to output format to Simpson's print jobs to provide

customized printing options for the users.

36.   Claims 33-36 are rejected for the same rationale as in claims 16-19 respectively.

37.   Claims 9 and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over

Simpson, in view of Nakamura et al. (US 2002/0161740, hereafter Nakamura).

38.   For claim 9, Simpson further discloses an effective period determining system

that determines whether an effective period designated by the terminal device has

expired. Simpson does not explicitly disclose a recovering system that sets the

operational parameters to previously set values after expiration of the effective period.

        However, Nakamura discloses the same ([0099]-[0101], restore the default

settings after a period of customized user's setting has expired)

        Therefore, it would have been obvious for one skilled in the art at the time of the

invention to combine the teachings of Simpson and Nakamura to reduce the potential

effects (conflicts) on other users.

39.   Claim 26 is rejected for the same rationale as in claim 9.

40.   Claims 38, 41, 44 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable

over Simpson, in view of Armstrong et al. (US 2004/0039779, hereafter Armstrong).

41.   For claim 38, Simpson discloses a network system having a plurality of terminal

devices and an electronic device whose function is shared by said plurality of terminal

device, said plurality of terminal devices and said electronic device being

communicatively connected through a network, operational parameters of said

electronic device being set by said plurality of terminal devices through the network,

said network system comprising:

a modifying system that modifies the operational parameters in accordance with

a request for modification of the operational parameters requested by a terminal device

([0076], second user requests to print job with a second settings other than first user's

settings);

a message storing system that stores a message with which the operational

parameters are modified in relationship with modified operational parameters (fig. 2A,

storage devices, [0076], [0074], e.g., messages indicating "interrupt request" or "job

deferred" associated with print jobs with different settings); and

a message outputting system that outputs the message stored in relationship

with the modified operational parameters by said message storing system in response

to an output command of a message corresponding to the modified operational

parameters ([0070], output, e.g., "job deferred" message when print job is changed or

modified and second settings are applied).

Simpson does not explicitly disclose that the message is input by a user of the

terminal device.

However, Armstrong discloses using customized messages that can be input by

a user instead of default messages ([0110]).

Therefore, it would have been obvious for one skilled in the art at the time of the

invention to combine the teachings of Simpson and Armstrong to customize status

messages to provide the message receiver more details about the status messages

(Armstrong, [0110]).

42.   Claims 41 and 44 are rejected for the same rationale in claim 38.

Conclusion

43.   The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to

applicant's disclosure:

- Ohara. US 6,314,476.

- Kaufman. US 6,757,366.

- Schlonski et al. US 2002/0196451.

44.   Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the

examiner should be directed to Hieu T. Hoang whose telephone number is 571-270-

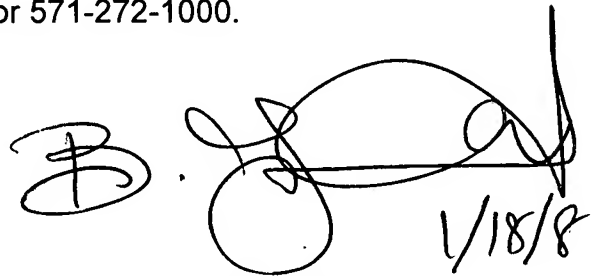1253. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.,

EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's

supervisor, Bunjob Jaroenchonwanit can be reached on 571-272-3913. The fax phone

number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-

273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the

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Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a

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HH

BUNJOB JAROENCHONWANIT
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER